

Public Information Notice
U.S. Department of the Navy
Installation Restoration Program
U.S. Naval Ammunition Support Detachment
Vieques Island, Puerto Rico

Background: On January 31, 2000, President William J. Clinton and Governor Pedro Rosselló reached an agreement on several actions to be taken while the future use of the U.S. Navy's training range on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico (PR), is being decided. One action is to transfer Navy property on the western side of the island, known as the U.S. Naval Ammunition Support Detachment (NASD), to the Government of Puerto Rico for the benefit of the Municipality of Vieques. On October 12, 2000, the U.S. Congress passed legislation directing the U.S. Navy to convey about 4,000 acres of NASD land to the Municipality of Vieques and 3,100 acres to the U.S. Department of the Interior, by May 1, 2001. If all parties agree, about 800 acres will be conveyed to the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust for use as Conservation Zones.

Environmental Investigation: The U.S. Navy intends to eliminate or minimize any risk from public exposure to possible contaminants when this Federal property is transferred to the Government of Puerto Rico. The Navy is working closely with the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (EQB) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) during the environmental investigation of the NASD. The Navy has prepared an overall Environmental Baseline Survey (EBS) of NASD. In June 2000, the Navy completed an environmental field investigation of 10 known sites where waste disposal or other activities may have resulted in contamination. The objective was to determine whether a release of hazardous materials has occurred at these sites and, based on the data, to recommend either further investigation or no further action for each site. Several small unexploded ordnance were identified at one site, the Inactive Waste Explosive Open Burn/Detonation Range. A fence will be installed around this site for public safety until the investigation and final remedial action are completed. Field work will begin in November 2000, to investigate another seven potentially-contaminated sites that were identified by the EBS.

Public Participation: The Navy published a newspaper notice on October 25-27, 2000, inviting the public to review a Finding of Suitability for Early Transfer (FOSET) and related documents. The Navy will publish additional newspaper notices and community fact sheets when reports from the environmental field investigations are released for public review. The Navy maintains Public Information Repositories in Ceiba and Vieques, where the public can review reports and related information about the Installation Restoration (IR) program for U.S. Navy property at Vieques Island and U.S. Naval Station Roosevelt Roads. New documents are continually being added. Information is available to the public at the following locations:

Biblioteca Pública, José Gautier Benitez, Calle Baldorioty de Castro, Vieques Island, PR.

Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Telephone: 787-741-3706.

Vieques Historic Archives, Museo Fuerte Conde de Mirasol, Barriada Fuerte, Vieques Island, PR.

Hours: Wednesday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Telephone: 787-741-4688 or 787-741-1717.

Biblioteca Pública Municipal, Alejandrina Quinofes Rivera, Calle Fco. Gauthier #816, URB. Rossy Valley, Ceiba, PR.

Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:00 am-12 Noon and 1:00-6:00 p.m.; Friday, 8:00 a.m. -4:30 p.m. Telephone: 787-885-0605.

The Navy will plan and implement a public involvement program to encourage ongoing public participation during the investigation and cleanup of the NASD. The Navy will prepare a Community Relations Plan, based on discussions with community leaders and Vieques Island residents. The plan will describe how the Navy will make information available, as well as how elected officials and concerned citizens can participate in the decision making process through two-way communication with the Navy. People who are interested in participating in the Community Relations Plan, or who would like to be placed on a mailing list for additional information, are invited to contact one of the people listed below.

For additional information, please contact:

• Sra. Madeline Rivera Ruiz, Environmental Division, U.S. Naval Station Roosevelt Roads Telephone: 787-865-5337.

E-mail: riveramad@navstarr.navy.mil

• Mr. Christopher T. Penny, Atlantic Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Telephone: 757-322-4815.

E-mail: PennyCT@efdlant.navfac.navy.mil

• Sr. Jose Jaime Lajara, Environmental Quality Board, Puerto Rico Telephone: 787-766-2817